

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY  
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats., a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, February 21, 2012, at 4:50 p.m., in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

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**PRESENT:** Chair Bernie Erickson, Jim Haskins, Delores Pierce, Duane Pierce, Joe Witkowski, Jerry Polus, Sherry Steenbock, Rosemary Desisles, John Walschinski, Don Bettine, Troy Ness  
**EXCUSED:** John Maino

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\*\*Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1244

1. **Call Meeting to Order.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Bernie Erickson at 4:50 p.m.

2. **Invocation by Jim Haskins.**

3. **Approve/Modify Agenda.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY SHERRY STEENBOCK, SECONDED BY DONALD BETTINE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. **Approve/Modify Minutes of January 17, 2012.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY JIM HASKINS, SECONDED BY DUANE PIERCE TO APPROVE THE MINUTES. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

5. **Discussion regarding recognition parade – Rosemary Desisles.**

Rosemary Desisles reported that she had spoken with Mike Weaver of the Patriot Guard, Mike Egan who is the President of the MOA and Jim Strong who is with the Fox Valley Veterans Council and they all said that once it is determined if and when a parade will be held, she should re-contact them to work out details. She also stated that the Fox Valley Veterans Council is planning a recognition event on July 22 at the Timber Rattlers game. Desisles continued that she had also contacted Major Smith of the 432<sup>nd</sup> and he felt a parade would be very important to the younger vets coming home; however, they will not be ready to do a parade until after March. She was advised by Major Smith that he could bring in as many as 200 vets but that would include some that had not been in Afghanistan.

Chair Erickson recalled that it was originally discussed to incorporate a parade into the Military Appreciation Day at the Fair. He stated if it was to be done in conjunction with the Fair it may be difficult to get road use permits due to Fair traffic. Troy Ness stated that several men in his unit are De Pere police officers and he would get their opinions as to the likelihood of getting permits to use public roads.

6. **Discussion regarding Military Appreciation Day at Brown County Fair.**

CVSO Jerry Polus said he had received a commitment from the U.S. Air Force Band of Mid-America to perform at the Fair on Saturday between 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. This would be a seven person ensemble that plays a variety of music and Polus noted that there is no cost for this band. Polus noted, however, that the Band had a request to perform in Chicago that same day, but the band's initial reaction was to decline that offer.

Polus also presented a new idea to this Subcommittee. He stated that last year a group was formed out of the Duck Creek VFW called the "Northeast Wisconsin Veterans Meet and Greet". The intent of this group was to have an event to inform veterans of the programs and services available to them through the VA as well as other organizations in the area. The event was held

last year and the attendance was decent, but not what they had hoped for. Polus suggested to this group that they consider partnering with this Subcommittee to hold an event in conjunction with Military Appreciation Day at the Fair. The group was very receptive to this and the idea has been presented to the Fair Board who was also receptive. Polus felt that this event could start at 3:00 or 4:00 p.m. with the information booths and a picnic and then perhaps the parade of veterans referenced earlier could be held followed by the regular ceremony followed by the band's performance. Polus stated that Ron Van Dyke of the Fair will be attending the next meeting to discuss this further, but at this point Polus was looking to see if this Subcommittee was interested in partnering with this other group and moving forward with further planning. All those in attendance felt this sounded like a great idea and Rosemary Desisles, Jim Haskins and Duane Pierce will attend the next meeting of the NE Wisconsin Meet and Greet on March 7 and then report back to this Subcommittee.

Polus continued that he felt the key to success for an event like this would be ample advertising and several ideas were discussed, but the details of this will be worked out closer to the time of the Fair. Erickson stated several things to consider with regard to advertising is to put an ad on Channel 4 which is free and also to contact Jerry Bader at WTAQ and John Maino at WIXX. Polus suggested that if we decide to go with the above format, he felt a small PR committee could be formed within the Subcommittee to handle the PR for the event.

**7. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus.**

CVSO Jerry Polus provided a brief update on Veterans Court and stated that they continue to hold organizational meetings every Friday. They are currently in the process of screening applicants and Polus felt that they will be ready to start holding court sometime in March. Hearings will be held on Friday afternoons at approximately 3:00 p.m. with Judge Kelley presiding.

**8. Report from Committee Members Present (Bettine, Desisles, Haskins, Ness, Pierce, Steenbock, Walschinski & Witkowski).**

**-Donald Bettine** stated he was somewhat concerned about the future of the Brown County Veterans Memorial Arena as he had seen an article in the Press Gazette stating that the condition of the arena has declined and PMI does not endorse spending a lot of money on repairs. Bettine stated there will be a meeting at PMI on February 23 that he planned to attend to find out more. Chair Erickson stated that although PMI is sponsoring that meeting, there are currently a number of other factors that will be considered in the outcome of the arena as well as the other buildings in the arena complex.

Bettine also stated that the United Patriotic Society will hold its Memorial Day service on Monday, May 28, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. at Flatley Park.

**-Rosemary Desisles** did not have anything to report that she had not covered in Item 5 above.

**-Jim Haskins** stated that he had recently watched the Barrett-Jackson Auction and they auctioned off a 2012 Dodge Charger Nationwide Series racecar for \$250,000 which was then matched by someone in the audience and then someone else donated another \$100,000 for a total of \$600,000 which was donated to Paralyzed Veterans of American. They also sold Jay Leno's 2007 New Holland tractor for \$535,000 and these proceeds were donated to the Fischer House which pays for family expenses of vets recovering in the hospital. Also recently sold was a 1965 Ford Fairlane 400 for \$1 million dollars, the proceeds of which went to the Armed Forces Foundation.

Haskins also reported that GE is planning on adding 5,000 jobs for veterans in the next year in conjunction with a program called "Hire Our Vets".

**-Troy Ness** wanted to make the Subcommittee aware of a new insurance plan by Humana that is limited to veterans and their families and he had information available for anyone who was interested. He also stated that Humana is planning to add a plan in June to help veterans with

post-traumatic stress disorder. He further indicated that Humana is currently looking to hire approximately 1,000 veterans and family members of veterans within the next year.

Ness also reported on a recent benefit he attended for Sgt. Alexander. Over 670 people attended the benefit and close to \$49,000 was raised. He stated that a Clay Matthews autographed football sold for \$3,000 and was purchased by a man whose son saved the sergeant's life.

Ness also stated that he has been working to get vets his age involved in various veteran's activities and organizations. In speaking with the younger vets, he has learned that what is most important to them is keeping their benefits as well as finding jobs and businesses to support vets.

**-Duane Pierce** reported that Legion Post 11 on Irwin Street will be holding their bi-annual booyah sale on April 21 and will begin serving about noon. He also stated that on March 24 at the Amvet Post on Irwin there will be a fundraiser for the Motorcycle Riders Foundation which will include live music by Dave Sky and Coldwater Creek Band. The admission will be a \$5 donation. He continued that the Amvet Club is having difficulties staying open with the current economy. They serve food daily, including daily fish fries and it is open to the public.

**-Sherry Steenbock** stated that seven new certificates had been mailed out. She also stated that she has left several voice mails for Dave Behrendt regarding when the VFW Post plans to host the radio show this year, but she has not heard from him.

**-John Walschinski** stated that he will do what he can to assist Steenbock in getting in touch with Dave Behrendt but did not have anything else to report.

**-Joe Witkowski** wished everyone a Happy President's Day and recited the Gettysburg Address from memory in honor of President Abraham Lincoln.

**9. Such other Matters as Authorized by Law.**

Chair Bernie Erickson stated that the next meeting, which is scheduled for March 20, 2012, will begin at 5:00 p.m.

**10. Adjourn.**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY JIM HASKINS, SECONDED BY DONALD BETTINE TO ADJOURN AT 5:45 P.M. VOTE TAKEN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted,

Therese Giannunzio  
Recording Secretary